



February 7, 2025

## STATEMENT FROM MAYOR AND SCHOOL BOARD CHAIR

*Reaffirming Commitment to Public Safety, Education, and  
Due Process for All Residents*

Dear Residents of Newport News:

In response to recent U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids, we reaffirm our joint commitment to local public safety, community trust, and the protection of all residents—**regardless of immigration status**. The actions taken by federal authorities have raised concerns within our schools and the broader community, particularly regarding the impact on children, families, and the educational environment.

As a city, we remain **committed to public safety**. While we recognize our duty to cooperate with federal agencies, including ICE, in instances where public safety is genuinely at risk, such cooperation is always contingent upon the requirement of law. It is our intent to comply with the law while ensuring that local resources are dedicated to safeguarding our community's well-being rather than being diverted to federal immigration enforcement efforts.

We believe immigration enforcement efforts should prioritize individuals who pose significant risks to our community—particularly those involved in violent crimes or other severe offenses. Our community members who abide by the law should not be subjected to immigration enforcement actions that should be designated for those posing a threat to public safety.

Our schools must remain safe havens where all children, regardless of their background, feel secure and valued. We are committed to ensuring every student has the opportunity to learn and grow without fear, and we stand together in protecting their right to an education free from external pressures that could hinder their potential.

Together, we will continue to prioritize the protection of our children. We will not allow federal immigration policies to disrupt the educational experience or hinder the progress of our youth.

**We stand united in our commitment to protecting the safety, security, and rights of all who live in our community.**

Sincerely,

Phillip Jones  
Mayor, City of Newport News

Lisa Surles-Law  
Chair, Newport News School Board